

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 SSM-03 AID-05 IO-13 OMB-01 TRSE-00 /079 W
-----036110 250539Z /23

R 241557Z AUG 77
FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4566
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

C O N F I D E N T I A L DAMASCUS 5435

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS : PLO
SUBJ: NO BGEAKTHROUGH EXPECTED AT PLO CENTRAL COUNCIL MEETING

1. IN RECENT INTERVIEW PCC CHAIRMAN KHALED FAHUM GAVE TO AL-BAATH HE MADE IT CLEAR THAT PLO WOULD NOT MAKE ANY DRAMATIC CHANGE IN CURRENT POLICIES AT AUGUST 25 PCC MEETING. DECLARING THAT THE PCC WOULD DEFINITELY MEET ON AUGUST 25 HE OUT-LINED AGENDA WHICH WOULD INCLUDE FOR DISCUSSION: LIKUD'S ASSESSION TO POWER, THE SHTURA AGREEMENT AND RECENT US INITIATIVES WHICH HE CHARACTERIZED AS "A FAILURE" IN VIEW OF MOST OBSERVERS. MOST IMPORTANTLY, FAHUM STATED THAT REJECTION OF UNSC RES 242 AND 338 WOULD BE REAFFIRMED. IN INCHARACTERISTIC SLAP AT US FAHUM CLAIMED PCC DISCUSSION WOULD UTILIZE INFORMATION RE "US-ISRAELI" PLANS AIMED AT "SOLIDATING" THE PALESTINIAN CAUSE.

2. ARAFAT'S STATEMENT TO EGYPTIAN PRESS AUGUST 24
(FIBIS NC 232245Y) UNDERSCORES IMPROBABILITY OF ANY MAJOR
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INITIATIVE BEING UNDERTAKEN AS RESULT OF MEETING. WHILE NOTING CONTINUING PLO DESIRE TO OPEN DIALOGUE WITH US RAFAT INDICATED THAT PCC'S DELIBERATIONS WERE ONLY "ADVISORY" AND FURTHERMORE THAT ALL PROPOSALS PERTAINING TO RECENT DIPLOMATIC AND POLITICAL MOVES HAD TO BE SUBMITTED TO THE PLAESTINIAN COMMAND AND THE MILITARY COUNCIL.

3. TENDING TO COORBORATE RECENT REPORTS THAT SARG HAD ENCOURAGED PLO TO HOLD OUT FOR FURTHER CONCESSIONS THAN OPENING OF DIALOGUE WITH US IN EXCHANGE FOR ACCEPTANCE OF 242 AL-BAAATH RAN COLUMN AUGUST 24 ON THE FORTHCOMING PCC MEETING WHICH STRESSED NEED FOR PLO TO INCREASE SOLIDATITY WITH SYRIA AND NOTED THAT SYRIAN POSITION WAS TO REFUSE ALL EFFORTS AIMED AT KEEPING PLO OUT OF MEPC. COLUMN QUOTED SALAH KHALAF (ABU IYAD) AS STATING THAT PLO WOULD SEEK TO INCREASE COHESION WITH SYRIA. PCC WAS URGED TO LAY DOWN " STRATEGIC FORMULA" ABLE TO MEET ANY SITUATION ARISING IN THE NEAR FUTURE. NO MENION WAS MADE OF NEED TO ACCEPT 242.

4. AP AND NY TIMES STRINGERS WHO HAVE FREQUENT CONTACTS WIH PLO OFFICIALS TOLD EMBOFF THAT ISRAEL'S TOUGH POLICIES AND DOUBTS ABOUT WHAT PLO WOULD RECEIVE IN RETURN FOR ACCEPTANCE OF 242 OTHER THAN "MERE TALKS" WITH US HAD DISSUADED PLO FROM UNDERTAKING ANY IMPORTANT INITIATIVE FOR PRESENT. SOURCES, HOWEVER, UNDERSTOOD FROM THEIR CONTACTS WITHIN THE MOVEMENT THA PLO REMAINS VERY INERESTED IN DIALOGUE WITH US BUT IS HAGGLING FOR A BETTER PRICE.

MURPHY

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